

The 19th Japanese-Kuwaiti Businessmen's Committee

The Japanese-Kuwaiti Businessmen's Committee held its 19th meeting on February 4, 2015 at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The conference invited Ms. Hind Sabeeh Al-Sabeeh, Kuwaiti Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister of Planning and Development; H.E. Mr. Toshihiro Tsujihara, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the State of Kuwait; and Mr. Nobuaki Ito, Deputy Director-General for International Trade Policy in METI's Trade Policy Bureau as guests of honor, and was attended by approximately 60 members on the Japanese side and 20 members on the Kuwaiti side. Members on the Japanese side included Mr. Hiroshi Saito, joint chairman (Honorary Advisor, Mizuho Financial Group); representatives of Japanese corporations and organizations, including those who also serve as members of the Japanese-Kuwaiti Businessmen's Committee; government officials; presenters; and observers. Members on the Kuwaiti side included Mr. Khaled Abdullah Al-Sagar, joint chairman (Vice President of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry); government representatives from the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, the Ministry of Electricity and Water, the Ministry of Communication, Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects and the Ministry of Health; and Kuwaiti members of the Japanese-Kuwaiti Businessmen's Committee.

Mr. Al-Sagar began the opening session by offering his deepest condolence over the ISIL Japanese hostage incident that came to a tragic end just shortly before the conference. The joint chairman then announced that the Committee is prepared to invest in national development plans worth \$21.6 billion, corresponding to twice the amount offered in the previous year, and that a framework has been established under a new organization, the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, for attracting direct investments from foreign countries.

Next, Mr. Saito spoke about how Japanese companies are regaining their competitiveness, while at the same time, Kuwait is launching reforms in rapid succession to attract foreign investment. Following Mr. Saito, Minister Al-Sabeeh delivered an address as guest of honor, thanking the Committee for its continuous contribution to development in Kuwait over the past twenty-some years, and requesting Japan's continuous cooperation in terms of expertise and technologies toward attainment of Kuwait's next Five-Year Plan.

Mr. Ito delivered a message from Mr. Yoichi Miyazawa, Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, in which the minister extended his gratitude to Kuwait for its support in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, and affirmed that the technologies of Japanese companies will further contribute to development in Kuwait.

At the end of the session, Ambassador Tsujihara noted that the awarding of contracts to Japanese companies to undertake the Azzour North IWPP Project and Clean Fuels Project symbolizes their

full-fledged return to the Kuwaiti market, and that the signing of the memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the infrastructure and transport sectors, which was exchanged last October during Minister Sabeeh's visit to Japan, signifies Japan's pledge to provide further cooperation in the future.

In Session 1 of the conference, Dr. Reyadh Yousef Al-Faras, -Assistant Secretary-General for Planning Affairs, Secretariat of the Supreme Council of Planning and Development of Kuwait, lectured on Kuwait's five-year plan; Dr. Hamad Ali Al-Hasawi, Secretary-General of the Kuwait Banking Association, on the present state of Kuwait's economy; and Mr. Yasuo Yamamoto, Chief Representative of the London Office of Mizuho Research Institute Ltd., on an overview of Japan's economy.

Session 2 was themed on infrastructure. As presenters on the Kuwaiti side, Dr. Salem Al-Hajraf, Executive Director of the Energy and Buildings Research Center, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, gave a presentation titled "Role of Renewable Energy on Kuwait Future Energy Security"; Eng. Naser Khraibet from the Public Authority for Housing Welfare gave a presentation titled "Housing Projects in Kuwait"; Eng. Iyad Al-Falah, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity and Water, gave a presentation titled "Power Generation and Water Desalination Plants Projects 2030"; Mr. Najeeb Al-Menifi, Advisor for the Ministry of Communication, gave a presentation titled "Kuwait Metro & Rail Road Project"; and Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Hodaib, Project Manager of Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects unofficially joined the session on that day and gave a presentation titled "Power Projects Update."

On the Japanese side, Ms. Sartawi Mais, an architect from the Dubai Office of Nikken Sekkei Ltd., gave a presentation on "Urban Development Master Plan in the MENA Region"; Mr. Takahiko Onozuka, General Manager, IPP & IWPP Dept. No.2 at Sumitomo Corporation, gave a presentation on "Commitment to Infrastructure Development in Kuwait, Az-Zour North 1 IWPP Project"; Mr. Hideaki Tazawa, Senior Manager of the Solar Thermal Energy Business Development Team, Business Development Unit 3 at Chiyoda Corporation, gave a presentation on "Molten Salt Parabolic Trough Technology"; and Mr. Akihiko Tsuchida, General Manager and Mr. Elie Rizk, Directors of Business Development at the Dubai Office of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd., gave a presentation on "Product Overview with Highlight on Kuwait Projects"

Session 3 focused on medical services, as did the 18th Businessmen's Committee. Dr. Ebtisam Ebrahim Al-Huwaidi, RCGB-INT, Director of Geriatric Health Services Administration of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health gave a presentation on "Geriatrics in the State of Kuwait" and on the Japanese side, Mr. Hideaki Aratani, Group Leader of the Life Science Business Department in the No. 3 Business Division of JGC Corporation, gave a presentation on "JGC Healthcare Business".

At the end of the conference, the two joint chairmen summarized the day's discussions, and brought the conference to a close after confirming that the next Japanese-Kuwaiti Businessmen's

Committee shall be held in Japan on a date to be set by the Secretariat.



[Left] Mr. Khaled Abdullah Al-Sagar presenting a commemorative gift to Mr. Hiroshi Saito, from joint chairman to joint chairman

[Right] The joint chairmen representing the Kuwaiti and Japanese sides and the guests of honor



[Left] Scene of the conference

[Right] The two joint chairmen enjoy a chat during the reception following the conference